

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 02765

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS SHUM IR
SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS; SHAH CONDEMNS SUBVERSION;
MORE PRISONERS BEING RELEASED; PARLIAMENT DEFEATS CENSURE
MOTION ON GOI HANDLING OF TABRIZ

REF: A. TEHRAN 2572 (NOTAL), B. TEHRAN 2242 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: SHAH CASTIGATES THOSE WHO USE LIBERTY FOR TREASON.
COMBINED AMNESTIES TO RELEASE AN ADDITIONAL 1203 PRISONERS,
40 OF WHOM ARE ANTI-STATE SECURITY PRISONERS. PARLIAMENT
DEFEATS CENSURE MOTION FOR HANDLING OF TABRIZ RIOTS. JUDICIAL
AUTHORITIES ANNOUNCE 400 REMAIN UNDER ARREST IN TABRIZ WITH
300 RELEASED. RUMORS STILL ABOUND, BUT COUNTRY QUIET. END
SUMMARY.

1. IN SPEECH MARCH 18 AT ABADAN, SHAH INTER ALIS CONDEMNED
THOSE WHO CROSSED THE BORDER BETWEEN LIBERTY AND TREASON TO
WORK FOR ADVANTAGE OF A FOREIGN POWER. HE REITERATED
THEME THAT DETAILS, BUT NOT FUNDAMENTALS, OF SHAH-PEOPLE
REVOLUTION ARE OPEN FOR NEGOTIATION AND DISCUSSION. HE
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RENEWED EARLIER PLEDGE TO CONTINUE EXTENSION OF FREEDOM
DESPITE ACTIVITIES OF "REDS AND REACTIONARIES" AND
EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THOSE CREATING UNREST WOULD ONE DAY
"SEE THE LIGHT".

2. IN TWO AMNESTIES ANNOUNCED PAST TWO DAYS, IN ADDITION
TO THAT NOTED REF A, GOI WILL RELEASE 385 PRISONERS WHO

WERE TRIED IN MILITARY COURTS, INCLUDING 40 ANTI-STATE SECURITY PRISONERS (NAMES BEING POUCHED DEPT AND LONDON). AN ADDITIONAL 818 PRISONERS TRIED IN CIVILIAN COURTS WILL BE RELEASED AND ANOTHER 1300 INMATES WILL HAVE THEIR SENTENCES REDUCED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROGRAM NOTED REF A. IN RELATED ACTIVITIES, MINISTRY OF JUSTICE SAID 31 STUDENTS ARRESTED IN RECENT ROUNDUP FOR PASSING PROPAGANDA (REF B) WILL BE TRIED SOON, 22 IN CIVILIAN COURTS ON DISORDERLY CONDUCT CHARGES AND NINE IN "OTHER" COURTS (PRESUMABLY MILITARY TRIBUNALS) FOR PASSING SUBVERSIVE PROPAGANDA. MINJUSTICE ALSO ANNOUNCED FREEING OF ONE STUDENT FROM EARLIER EPISODE AT TEHRAN UNIVERSITY AND HEAD OF TEHRAN COURTS HOSSEIN MORTAZAVI ANNOUNCED THAT DESPITE PUBLIC PRESSURES FOR "UNLAWFUL" ACTION, COURT TRIAL OF TWO RECENT KIDNAP-MURDERERS WOULD FOLLOW DUE PROCESS OF LAW. STATEMENT WAS IN RESPONSE TO PARLIAMENTARY AND OTHER CALLS FOR EXTRA-SPEEDY JUSTICE FOR TWO KILLERS.

3. MARCH 16 TABRIZ MAJLES MEMBER AHMAD BANI-AHMAD SUBMITTED CENSURE MOTION AGAINST GOVERNMENT FOR POOR HANDLING OF TABRIZ RIOTS. AFTER HEARING ARGUMENTS FROM BANI-AHMAD, ONE OTHER DEPUTY AND COUNTER-SIDCUSSION FROM MININTERIOR NASR-ISFAHANI, INTERSPERSED WITH VIOLENT ARGUMENTS, MAJLES OVERWHELMINGLY VOTED CONFIDENCE IN GOI. THIS IS FIRST CENSURE MOTION SINCE AT LEAST EARLY SIXTIES. IN MEMORY OF MAJLES OBSERVERS AND SIGNIFICANT FACT WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT IT WENT FORWARD AT ALL. MAJLES CLEARLY UNEASY ABOUT SCENARIO AND NON-ROLL CALL VOTE UNDOUBTEDLY DID NOT REFLECT TRUE FEELINGS OF SOME DEPUTIES, WHO LINED UP WITH SOLID MAJORITY AFTER BLOWING OFF STEAM. PRESS CARRIED MINOR MENTION OF MITION.

4. TABRIZ JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT 400 OF ABOUT 700 ULTIMATELY ARRESTED REMAIN IN JAIL FOR THEIR PART IN FEB 18 RIOTS. TRIALS ARE NOT EXPECTED TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY UNDERWAY FOR FOUR MONTHS, ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS, BUT MINJUSTICE SOURCE SAID GOI IS EXPECTING TO SPEED THIS UPP.

5. MARCH 19 TEHRAN JOURNAL CARRIED FULL COLUMN EDITORIAL ON NEED TO COMBAT VICIOUS RUMORS. EDITORIAL NOTED WITH APPROVAL GOI WAS TAKING ALL PRECAUTIONS, BUT SAID RUMORS WERE SO FAR BASELESS, AND THAT EVEN IF THERE WERE ATTEMPTS TO DISRUPT, NATION WOULD GO FORWARD WITH DEVELOPMENT. AS IRAN HEADS INTO TRADITIONAL NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY BEGINNING MARCH 21, MOST ACTIVITY, INCLUDING DEMONSTRATIONS, EXPECTED TO SLOW DOWN DRAMATICALLY THOUGH WE UNDERSTAND COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES FOR "VICTIMS" OF TABRIZ RIOTS

ARE STILL PLANNED FOR MARCH 30 IN MANY MOSQUES.
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